

## RIVERSIDE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

### Fact Sheet

POSITION:	The courts are a third, co-equal, branch of government, and need to be adequately staffed and funded to ensure public safety and access to justice.
NEED:	Riverside County Superior Court desperately needs the Governor to fill the 3 judicial positions that are vacant and for the Legislature to create and fund more judgeships.
FACTS:	<p>Riverside County has 2.2 million residents and 76 judges. This equates to 3.5 judges per 100,000 people – the statewide average is 5.2. This court has the third highest ratio of case filings per judge in the state.</p> <p>Between 2000-2010, the county's population increased by nearly 42%, but the number of funded judicial positions increased only 10%.</p> <p>The court uses retired judges to supplement the judicial workforce. Due to budget issues, these resources are diminishing.</p> <p>A study conducted by the state Administrative Office of the Courts concluded that the court needs 146 judges. In fact, we have only 76 judicial officers (again, counting the three vacancies as being filled). This is a deficit of 70. The need for more judges is acute and increases every year.</p> <p>The courts in this state are facing their third year of crippling budget reductions. The judicial branch represents 2.88% of the state budget, yet is forced to shoulder 3.5% of the entire state's budget solution.</p>
RESULTS :	<p>Substantial hearing delays and filing backlogs</p> <p>Reduced public service hours and longer wait times</p>
WHO IS AFFECTED?:	<p>Families waiting to have custody and support matters handled</p> <p>Children waiting to be reunited with parents or taken out of unsafe homes</p> <p>Business owners needing their civil disputes heard</p> <p>Victims of domestic violence in need of restraining orders</p> <p>Victims of crime waiting for justice in criminal cases</p> <p>Elderly citizens needing care and conservatorship</p> <p>Landlords and tenants needing to resolve tenancy issues</p>
ACTION NEEDED:	<p>Write to Governor Brown and urge him to promptly fill the current vacancies and any new ones as they arise.</p> <p>Write to your local legislators and urge them to fund 7 new judges (Assembly Bill 159/2007) and support future legislation for more judges.</p>
CONTACT:	Go to the court's website at <a href="http://www.riverside.courts.ca.gov">www.riverside.courts.ca.gov</a> (under <i>Court News and Notices</i> ) for a sample letter and contact information.